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(54) Playthings - novelty items for vehicles

(57) An animal-like plaything has a first section 13/14 and a second section 16-18 joined together by a relatively thin and flexible fabric web 12. The web may be placed over the top edge of a vehicle window glass 19, with one section within the vehicle and the other section outside the vehicle: the glass may then be fully raised with the web 12 trapped between the glass and the window seal.

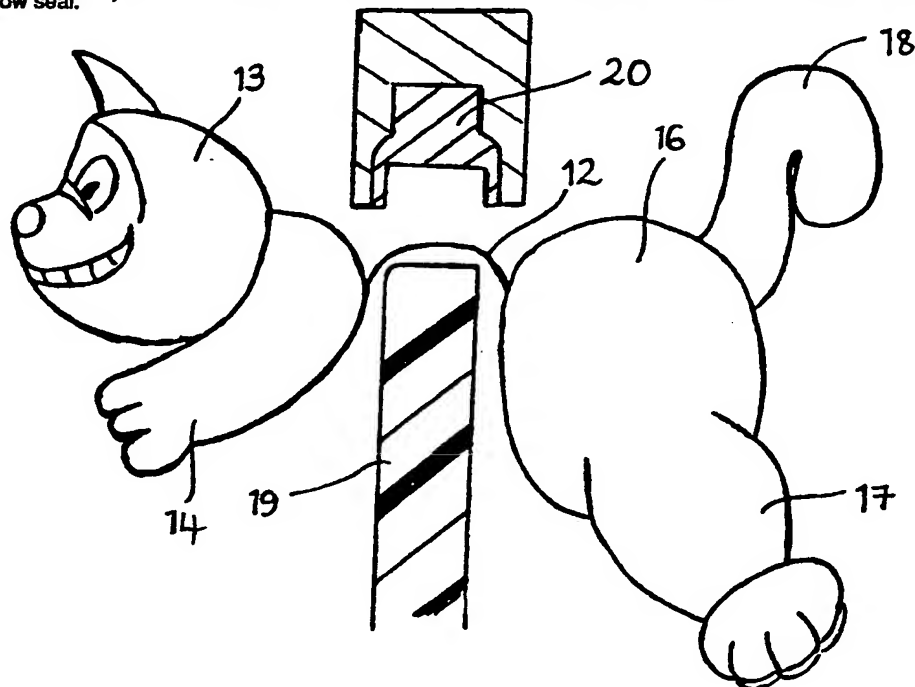
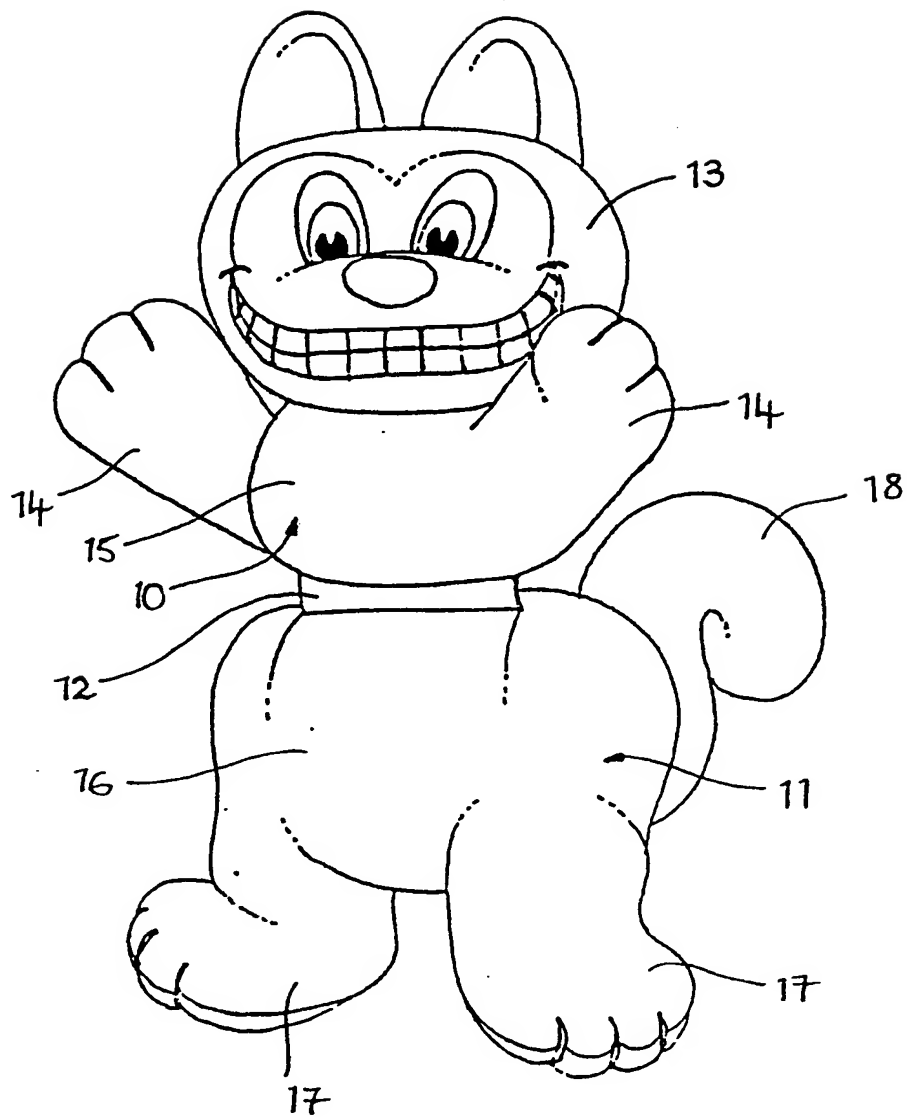


FIG 2

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FIG 1

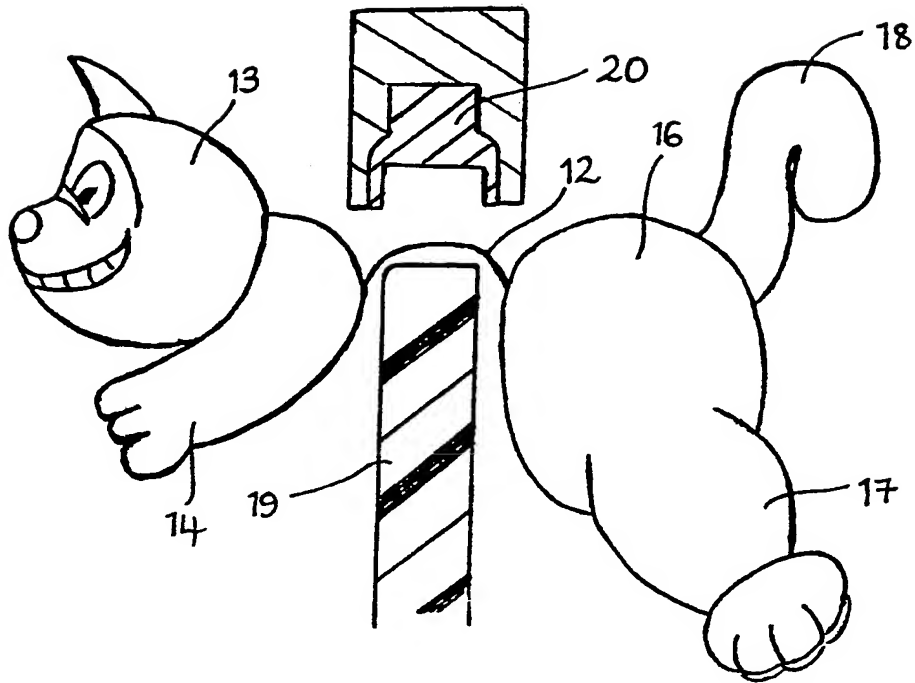


FIG 2

PLAYTHINGS

This invention relates to playthings, and in particular - but not exclusively - to playthings in the form of specially configured soft toys.

It is common for the owner of or the passengers in
5 a vehicle to arrange one or more kinds of animal-like soft toys or playthings in such positions that those toys or playthings may be seen externally of the vehicle, by other road users. For example, an animal-like soft toy is not infrequently placed on the rear
10 parcel shelf of a vehicle, such that it may easily be seen through the rear window by other road users. Also, various kinds of soft toys or playthings are frequently suspended from the internal rear-view mirror of the vehicle - though this practice is to be deprecated for
15 it may restrict the vision of the driver. More recently, various types of animal-like soft toy have been produced with suction pads suitably disposed for example on the "feet", so that the toy may be stuck to a window of the vehicle, largely for the benefit of other
20 road users rather than the passengers in the vehicle.

This invention aims at providing a plaything intended principally for use in a vehicle, for the amusement both of the passengers in the vehicle and other road users.

25 Accordingly, this invention provides a plaything comprising a first section in the likeness of the fore-

part of an animal, a second section in the likeness of the rear-part of an animal, and a relatively thin flexible member interconnecting the confronting regions of the two sections such that there is a gap between
5 those two sections.

It will be appreciated that the plaything of this invention is generally in the form of an animal-like toy or plaything, except that the 'body' of the toy or plaything is divided and that there is a relatively thin
10 flexible member interconnecting the confronting parts of that divided body. This allows the plaything to be positioned in the window opening of a vehicle, with one section disposed within the interior of the vehicle and the other section disposed outside the vehicle, the
15 flexible member overlying the upper edge of the window glass. Then, the window glass may be fully raised to close the window opening, the flexible member conforming to the shape of the seal at the top of the window opening to give the impression that the 'animal' has
20 become trapped in the window, with part of the animal inside the vehicle and the other part outside.

The relatively thin flexible member may take any suitable form provided that it may still interconnect the two sections of the plaything despite being forced
25 to conform to the shape of the top edge of a window, when fitted into the window seal. The member may thus be in the form of a relatively thin and flexible piece

of sheet-like plastics or other material, appropriately connected at its two ends to the two sections respectively of the plaything. Another possibility would be for the member to be a woven, knitted or other
5 textile fabric, appropriately connected for instance by stitching to the two sections. A further possibility is for the flexible member to be a piece of elasticated fabric, appropriately stitched to the two sections, to permit a certain degree of stretching for instance as a
10 window is closed, after the plaything has been disposed over the window glass edge. Yet another possibility would be for the flexible member to be a cord or other filamentary member - in which case it would be advantageous to provide a plurality of such members
15 arranged substantially in parallel.

The first and second sections may be made in any appropriate manner, having regard to the required appearance which is to be conveyed by the plaything. For example, both the first and second sections may be
20 made by conventional soft toy manufacturing techniques, and thus having pieces of cloth or fabric cut and sewn together as appropriate, whereby when packed with an appropriate filling material, the required appearance is achieved. Thus, both the fore-part and the rear-part of
25 the animal may be very stylised or perhaps a caricature, or an attempt could be made to make a relatively realistic impression - for example, of a cat. On the other hand, the fore-part and the rear-part could be of

some mythical animal, such as a monster.

Different manufacturing techniques could be employed for at least one of the two sections, in order to impart to that section certain weatherproof qualities
5 - and that section could then be disposed on the outside of the vehicle. For example, at least one of the sections could be manufactured by a moulding technique, from an appropriate grade of a plastics material or a foamed natural or synthetic rubber material, as
10 appropriate. Such a moulded component could then be decorated as required - for example to represent the face and fore paws of an animal, such as a cat.

Whilst ordinarily it is anticipated that the first and second sections will generally be in the likeness of
15 the fore-part and the rear-part of the same animal, a more amusing impression could perhaps be obtained by conjoining with the flexible member the fore-part of one animal with the rear-part of a quite different animal. Also, it may be not be necessary to provide the whole of
20 an animal fore-part, or the whole of an animal rear-part, as appropriate, for one of the sections, without detracting from the amusing mounting possibility for the plaything in the window opening of a vehicle. For instance, the flexible member may interconnect a first
25 section generally just in the form of the head of the animal, and a second section in the form of the front legs and a small part of the body of the animal. It

should therefore be appreciated that the terms "fore-part" and "rear-part" should be construed within the context of this Specification very broadly, depending upon the particular circumstances of the plaything in question, to refer to one part relative to the other.

By way of example only, one specific embodiment of plaything constructed and arranged in accordance with the present invention will now be described in detail, reference being made to the accompanying drawings, in which :-

Figure 1 is a generally perspective front view of a somewhat cat-like plaything constructed in accordance with the invention; and

Figure 2 is a side view of the plaything of Figure 1, as disposed in a vehicle window opening.

The embodiment of plaything of this invention illustrated in the drawings is intended to be a stylised three dimensional caricature of a cat and comprises a first section 10 and a second section 11, interconnected by a fabric web 12. The first section 10 includes a head portion 13, front legs 14 and the front portion 15 of a body; the second section 11 comprises the rear portion 16 of the body, rear legs 17 and a tail 18. The first and second sections are manufactured by cutting and sewing together pieces of fabric appropriately coloured, which sections are then packed with a suitable filling material, so as to give the sections the required degree of firmness and form. All of these

component parts may be decorated as required in any suitable manner; for example, the head 13 is shown as having eyes, nostrils and teeth, provided by affixing appropriately coloured and cut pieces of fabric to the
5 head itself. The other parts may be decorated for instance by direct printing on the fabric.

The fabric web 12 is sewn into the confronting parts of the front and rear portions 15 and 16 of the body, whereby there is a gap between those confronting
10 portions of about 25 mm. The fabric web 12 is relatively flexible and thin, so permitting that web to take up any required shape.

The plaything described above is intended for positioning through the window opening of a vehicle,
15 with the fabric web 12 overlying the upper edge of the window glass 19 as illustrated in Figure 2. When so positioned, with one of the two sections inside the vehicle and the other of the two sections outside the vehicle, the window glass may be raised fully, so that
20 both the glass and the flexible web 12 are accommodated within the seal 20 of the window frame. This securely holds the plaything in the required position and yet at the same time protects occupants of the vehicle from the external ambient conditions.

25 It will be appreciated that the plaything presents an amusing aspect both for other road users and for occupants of the vehicle by positioning the plaything in

the manner described above. The first section may be positioned either internally or externally of the vehicle - but whichever way the plaything is positioned, people are given the somewhat amusing appearance of the
5 stylised animal having been trapped and partially squashed by the window glass.

CLAIMS

1. A plaything comprising a first section in the likeness of the fore-part (as defined herein) of an animal, a second section in the likeness of the rear-part (as defined herein) of an animal, and a relatively
5 thin flexible member interconnecting the confronting regions of the two sections such that there is a gap between those two sections.
2. A plaything according to claim 1, wherein the flexible member is in the form of a relatively thin and
10 flexible piece of sheet-like plastics material, appropriately connected at its two ends to the two sections respectively of the plaything.
3. A plaything according to claim 1, wherein the flexible member is a woven, knitted or other textile
15 fabric, appropriately connected to the two sections respectively of the plaything.
4. A plaything according to claim 1, wherein the flexible member comprises a piece of elasticated fabric appropriately connected to the two sections respectively
20 of the plaything.
5. A plaything according to claim 1, wherein the flexible member comprises one or more filamentary members appropriately connected at its two ends to the two sections respectively of the plaything.
- 25 6. A plaything according to any of the preceding

claims, wherein at least one of the first and second sections comprises pieces of cloth or fabric cut and sewn together and then packed with an appropriate filling material, to impart shape and form to that
5 section.

7. A plaything according to any of the preceding claims, wherein at least one of the first and second sections comprises a moulding, of an appropriate grade of a plastics material or a foamed natural or synthetics
10 rubber material.

8. A plaything according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the first and second sections are generally in the likeness of the fore-part and the rear-part of the same animal.

15 9. A plaything substantially as hereinbefore described, with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.